4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

346 is painted, it is not certain whether it is stone or wood. It has two sets of cloisters round the body of the church, both
346 covered in, and much painted with figures of apostles,
532 patriarchs, prophets, and many things of the Old Law, and
353 many angels, and St. George on horseback, who is in all the churches. This monastery also possesses a great cloth, like a piece of tapestry, on which is the crucifix and effigy of Our Lady and the apostles, and other figures of patriarchs and prophets, and each one has his Latin name written, so that no man of the country made it. It has many small and ancient pictures, not well made, and they are not upon the altars, for it is not their custom: they keep them in a
[212] sacristy, mixed up with many books, and they bring them out on feast days. There is in this monastery a very large kitchen and bakehouse, also a very large refectory, in which
792 they eat. They mostly eat three and three[1] in a large dish,
262 it is not deep, but flat like a tray, and their food is very
[264] poor. The bread is of maize and barley, and other grain which they call *taffo*,[2] a small black grain. They make this bread round, and of the size and roundness of a citron,[3] and they give three of these to each friar: to the novices they give three loaves to two of them, it is a matter of amazement how they can maintain themselves. They also give them a few vegetables, without salt or oil. Of this food they send to a great many old pensioners, who do not come to the refectory. Besides seeing these things when we
792 buried Matthæus, I saw them many times, because I came there to pass time with the friars, principally on feast days, when we were near there. In this way I learned about them and their property, and revenues and customs. In my opinion there were generally always a hundred friars in this

[1] By threes.

[2] Mansfield Parkins calls it teff, the species of corn most esteemed in this country.

[3] Zamboa, not referred to in Selves' translation.

E: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

the eye. Its beauty was not increased by the addition of a corrugated iron annexe for the purpose of seating some of the foreign guests at the Emperor's coronation.

The Abouna was good enough to arrange for us to visit the church, and we were received with ceremony by a number of priests, who were exceedingly kind and enabled us to make a thorough inspection, and even allowed us to take some photographs (which unfortunately, owing to the bad light, did not come out). They showed us everything with great enthusiasm and begged us to return "when a great feast was in progress". The building consists of three portions, a sort of outer gallery, an inner court, and finally the Holy Place or Holy of Holies, an inner chamber in the centre of the building in which rests the *Tabot* or representative of the Ark of the Covenant to which only the priests are allowed access.

The priests threw open the doors of the Holy Place for us to see in; it contained a kind of altar where the Sacraments are kept, and was surrounded by priests in very gorgeous vestments, burning incense and holding big crosses and crucifixes.

In one of the galleries a service was proceeding. Two priests were beating with their hands very big drums made of wood and hide; many others were shaking their curious little brass cymbals; and all were chanting, swaying their bodies, and slowly waving their praying-sticks. The time was really good, and the chant was rhythmic and tuneful, and not at all unmelodious.

The galleries were profusely decorated with huge life-size paintings depicting mainly scenes from the Scriptures, scenes from the life of Christ, the miracles, etc.; one dreadfully realistic picture of the Massacre

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

353 532 of the Innocents was very striking. There was also a portrait of the Emperor Menelik, and of other noted characters in Abyssinian history; the likenesses of royal and other famous persons are frequently to be found on the walls or among the possessions of the principal churches.

778 In this connection an amusing incident is told by Stern. King Sehala Selassie had been given by Captain Harris' mission to the Court of Shoa, a portrait of Queen Victoria. This had been carefully guarded for many years amongst his treasures until his death, some time after which his successor, King Haile Malekot, presented it to the principal church at Ankober where the people used to flock on grand festivities to worship it as the representation of the Virgin Mary!

The *Tabot*, to which reference has been made, is the object of much veneration and has to be blessed or consecrated prior to being used in the particular church to which it is allocated. In one case the priest in charge of the church had committed a murder, and the *Tabot* had to be sent up to Addis to be reconsecrated before it could be used again.

196 785 The most prominent features of the practice of their religion are the fasts, feasts, and pageants; and each of these is sufficiently remarkable. A very large part of the year—about 150 days—falls under the category of fast or feast, and both are strictly observed. During their fasts they are forbidden not only meat, but also butter and milk and eggs, and it is really surprising to see to what an extent this rigid abstinence is followed, especially as the fasting periods are lengthy, that prior to Easter lasting forty days.

For a day or so immediately prior to the main feast,